

**Top Secret**

(62)

25X1



DIRECTORATE OF  
INTELLIGENCE

## MEMORANDUM

### *The Situation in Vietnam*

25X1

**Top Secret**

113

13 February 1967

**Page Denied**

25X1

Information as of 1600  
13 February 1967

25X1

### HIGHLIGHTS

A new airfield capable of handling jets is near completion near the North Vietnamese town of Bai Thuong. When completed, it will be the southernmost field in the DRV with this capability.

I. The Military Situation in South Vietnam:  
Viet Cong terrorists fired three mortar rounds at the MACV compound in downtown Saigon; a South Vietnamese troop convoy was hit (Paras. 1-3). As the result of four engagements yesterday, US forces in Operation PERSHING suffered casualties of six killed and 26 wounded (Para. 4). US troops of Operation GADSDEN in northern Tay Ninh Province discovered an enemy communications equipment storage area on 12 February (Para. 5). Three US Marine battalions began search-and-destroy Operation STONE in Quang Nam Province on 12 February (Para. 6).

25X1

25X1

II. Political Developments in South Vietnam:  
The resignation of South Vietnam's ambassador to Laos has been accepted by Premier Ky (Paras. 1-2).

III. Military Developments in North Vietnam:  
An airfield capable of handling jets is near completion near Bai Thuong, and will be the southernmost jet airfield in the DRV (Para. 1).

25X1

IV. Other Communist Military Developments:  
There is nothing of significance to report.

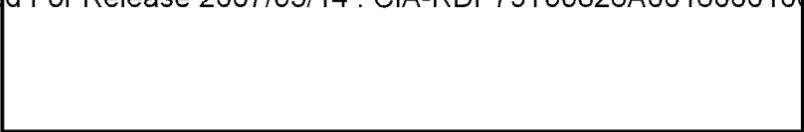
V. Communist Political Developments:

25X1

Hanoi has dismissed the extension of the US bombing pause beyond 12 February as not fulfilling DRV demands (Para. 2). The Chinese Communist foreign minister has restated Peking's stand on Vietnam (Paras. 3-5).

25X1



  
I. THE MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. The Viet Cong fired three mortar rounds from a position within the city at the MACV headquarters in downtown Saigon early on 13 February. The first round hit the roof of a warehouse in the MACV compound, but failed to explode. The second was 200 feet short of the building. It detonated in the midst of a convoy of South Vietnamese airborne troops and killed at least eight of them. The third round landed two blocks from the headquarters and exploded in front of the residence of a British Embassy official causing only minor damage.

2. Twenty minutes after the attack, the house from which the mortar was fired--about eight blocks from MACV headquarters--was shattered by an explosion in which the terrorists may have been killed. No Americans were injured by the attack or the subsequent explosion.

3. This incident is the first in which Viet Cong guerrillas launched a mortar attack from within Saigon itself. Previous mortar attacks--the last major one on 1 November 1966 killed 12 persons and injured 30 more--were launched from several miles outside the city.

4. As the result of four separate engagements between US and Communist troops in northeastern coastal Binh Dinh Province on 12 February, six Americans were reported killed and 26 wounded. Preliminary reports from American forces participating in recently-initiated Operation PERSHING in Binh Dinh indicate more than 10 enemy soldiers were killed.

5. US troops participating in search-and-destroy Operation GADSDEN in northwestern Tay Ninh Province located a large store of enemy communications equipment on 12 February. Included in the material seized were 35 pounds of maps, radio tubes, and telephones. Since this operation began its sweep into the Communists' long-time sanctuary--War Zone "C"--on 1 February, 113 Viet Cong have been killed. In comparison, American casualties now stand at 26 killed and 91 wounded.

13 February 1967

I-1



25X1

25X1

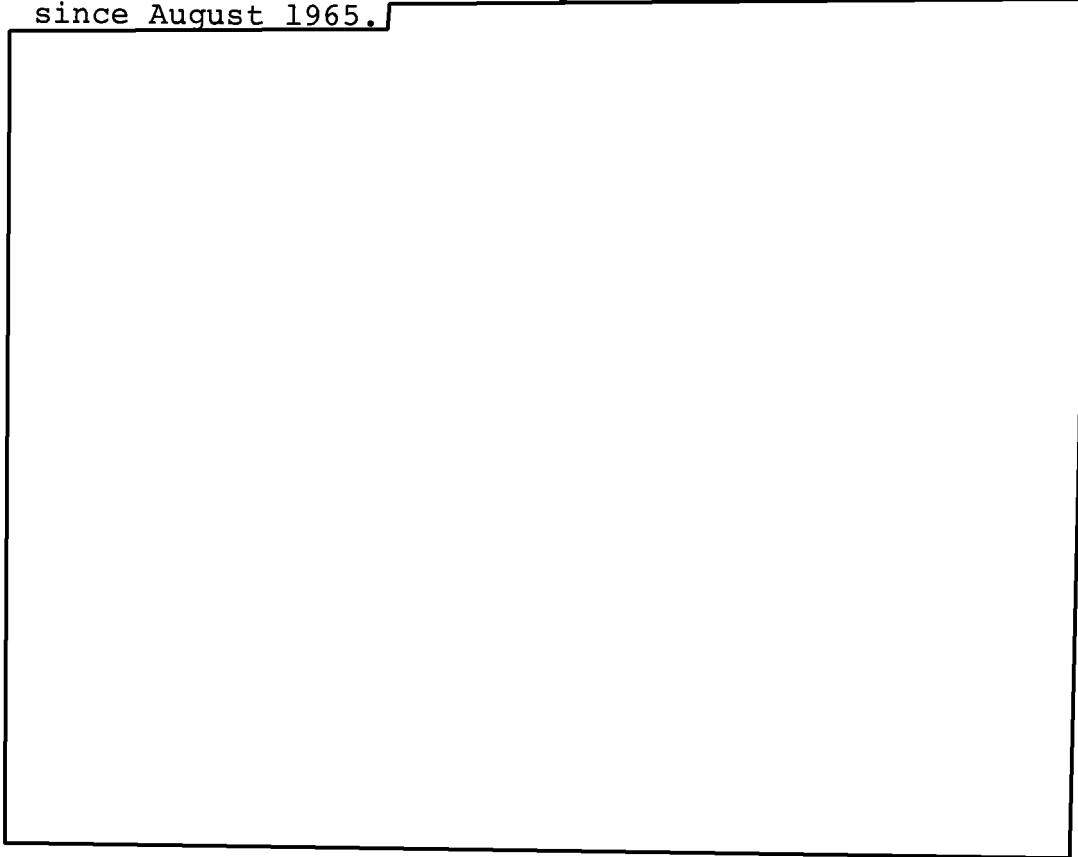


6. Three battalions of US Marines began Operation STONE in the coastal flatlands of Quang Nam Province about 14 miles south of Da Nang on 12 February. This search-and-destroy operation is targeted against personnel and base camps of two Viet Cong local force battalions, with a combined strength of 800 men, which are reported operating in the area. No contact with enemy forces has been reported.

Vietnamese Communist Intelligence of B-52 Strikes

7. Prisoners of war have indicated that the Communists have had intelligence on B-52 strikes since August 1965.

25X1



13 February 1967

I-2

25X1



**Page Denied**

II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. Premier Ky has accepted the resignation of South Vietnam's ambassador to Laos, Pham Trong Nhan, according to a Vietnam Press Agency announcement of 11 February. The counselor at the embassy in Vientiane will act as chargé for the time being.

2. The circumstances of the resignation are not clear, but it has been apparent from previous reporting that Nhan was on the outs with the Saigon military leaders. The ambassador was probably the victim of a reported campaign of the military leaders to discredit him with the Laotian diplomatic community. The ruling generals, in an apparent effort to control ambassadorial assignments and keep choice positions open for their own candidates, have also been exerting pressures on Tran Van Do and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for some time.

13 February 1967

II-1

25X1

**Page Denied**

III. MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS IN NORTH VIETNAM

1. Analysis of aerial photography of Bai Thuong indicates that the airfield under construction there is complete except for final surfacing of the runway. If MIGs are deployed to Bai Thuong, it would become the southernmost fighter strip in the DRV air defense system. Its location would allow interdiction of US strikes coming from Thailand and for the defense of the Thanh Hoa - Vinh area from air attacks launched at sea. The field, first noted under construction [redacted] has a runway more than 6,500 feet long and at least 58 aircraft revetments.

25X1

25X1

13 February 1967

III-1

25X1

IV. OTHER COMMUNIST MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

1. There is nothing of significance to report.

13 February 1967

IV-1

V. COMMUNIST POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

25X1

Hanoi On Bombing Pause

3. Hanoi on 13 February dismissed the US extension of the Tet bombing pause over the DRV beyond the 8-12 February truce period as "incompatible with the DRV Government's pre-talk requirement that bombing should cease definitely and unconditionally." This statement was included in a Hanoi radio commentary on an article in the party daily Nhan Dan. Both the article and the commentary included across-the-board condemnations of recent US statements concerning the possibility of negotiations and of American action during the truce period.

Chinese Communist Line On Vietnam

4. Chinese Foreign Minister Chen Yi reiterated Peking's familiar themes on the Vietnam war in a 12 February speech. Speaking at a banquet in honor of

25X1

13 February 1967

V-1

25X1

[REDACTED]

a visiting Mauritanian Government delegation, Chen claimed that the US was attempting to save itself from "the doom of thorough defeat" by covering up an intensification of its war effort with a "smokescreen of peace talks." Chen denounced Soviet leaders for sacrificing the "fundamental interests" of the Vietnamese people by working with the US in this attempt. He claimed that the Vietnamese would "fight through to the end" and repeated Peking's generalized pledge of support by stating that the Chinese government and people would "fight shoulder to shoulder" with them until the US was driven out of Vietnam.

5. Chen's pledge of support does not increase Peking's commitments, but it is one of the few instances in recent months in which a high government official has mentioned the possibility of direct Chinese participation in the war. Coming at a time when the Soviets are denouncing Peking for blocking aid to Hanoi and opposing peace in Vietnam, the speech appears intended to persuade Hanoi to reject negotiations and continue the war. It may also be intended to demonstrate Peking's professed willingness to aid Hanoi.

13 February 1967

25X1

V-2